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Message Text

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66
ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 SAM-01 /086 W
---------- 089964
R 181527Z DEC 75
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3442
INFO: RUTAGN/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 267
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AEBASSY LAGOS 448
AMEMBASSY LISBON 267
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LOURENCO MARQUES
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 1171

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4886

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: AO,SF,NI,PINS
SUBJ: SOUTH AFRICAN POSITION IN ANGOLA: PRESS SUMMARY

1. DEC.18 PRESS CLAMORS FOR MORE INFORMTION ON SAG INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA. ONE REPORTER'S TELEPHONE INTERVIEW WITH MIN DEF BOTHA PRODUCED OBSERVATION FROM HIM THAT SITUATION GAVE NO REASON FOR PANIC , AND THAT SOUTH AFRICAN LOSSES HAD SO FAR BEEN QUITE LIMITED. BOTHA SAID IT WAS NOT IN SOUTH AFRICA'S INTERESTS TO "BLURT OUT" IN PUBLIC THE DETAILS OF ITS MILITARY POSITION. HE DECLINED TO
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ADD ANYTHING TO PREVIOUS OFFICIAL STATEMENTS.

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2. PRESS SPECULATES THAT SOME EFFORT MUST BE UNDERWAY TO SECURE RELEASE OF THE FOUR SERVICEMEN HELD BY MPLA. ONE REPORT INDICATES THEY MAY BE TAKEN TO NIGERIA FOR DISPLAY TO NIGERIAN AUTHORITIES PRESUMABLY AS PART OF AN MPLA EFFORT TO SECURE MORE CONCRETE FORMS OF ASSISTANCE FROM NIGERIA.

3. PRETORIA NEWS MILTARY CORRESPONDENT REPORTS FROM RUACANA THAT IT SEEMS UNLIKELY SAG WILL WITHDRAW TROOPS AS LONG AS THERE IS A DANGER THAT HYDROELECTRIC AND IRRIGATION SCHEME MIGHT FALL UNDER HOSTILE CONTROL. INTERVIEWING MILITARY AND CIVIL AUTHORITIES IN THE OVAMBO AREA, CORRESPONDENT NOTED THAT WATER FROM CALUEQUE IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO OVAMBO, WHERE NEARLY A THIRD OF A MILLION PEOPLE DEPEND ON IT FOR FARM AND COMMERCIAL USE. POWER FROM RUACANA IS EXPECTED TO SATISFY SOUTH WEST AFRICA NEEDS FOR THE NEXT 20 YEARS OR MORE. SA MILITARY OFFICER IS QUOTED AS SAYING , "WE WILL PUT IN ANYTHING NECESSARY TO DEFEND CALUEQUE".

4. PRETORIA NEWS EDITORIAL SAYS ISSUES ARE CLEAR CUT. SOVIETS MUST

NOT BE ALLOWED TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT PRESENCE IN THE STRATEGICALLY

IMPORTANT AREA OF SOUTHERN AFRICA. THIS SHOULD BE ACHIEVED BY POLITI-

CAL PRESSURE AND NEGOTIATION RATHER THAN MILITARY ENGAGEMENT. IF THE MILITARY PRESENCE OF SOUTH AFRICA IN ANGOLA PRESENTS PROBLEMS THEN NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD REMOVING THAT COMPLIICATION SHOULD BEGIN.

THE WEST, PARTICULARLY THE U.S. FACES DILEMMAS. EMOTIONALISM ATTACHED TO SOUTH AFRICA SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO BE A HANDY LIGHT-NING ROD FOR THOSE IN OAU WHO WOULD OTHERWISE NOT ACQUIESCE IN RUSSIAN

IMPERIALISM IN AFRICA. AS MIN DEF BOTHA SAID. SAG WILL WITHDRAW IF RUSSIAN THREAT REMOVED. "THIS IS THE MESSAGE THAT MUST BE DRUMMED HOME WITH ALL POSSIBLE VIGOR IN THE NEGOTIATION CHAMBERS OF THE WEST AND THE OAU."
NEWS CONCLUDES".
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